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DUXBURY CLIPPER

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

By HENRY CRAGIN WALKER

MANY of us doubtless wonder if we shall ever again have a quiet world when there will be no more wars and people will again leisurely.

I recall with pleasure those evenings in my grandfather's home when our family gathered around the piano and sang gospel hymns; perhaps the custom still prevails; I was reminded of those evenings when I found in my attic several ancient hymn books, well thumbed and much worn.

Often we played "Authors," a game which, like the dinosaurs, has passed away.

We had no cocktail parties, but we had fun playing post-office, "Going to Jerusalem," and "clap in, clap out, and spin the cover." My sister would often read to us parts of HENRY ESOMOND, VANITY FAIR, and verses from Whittier, Longfellow and Bryant. As Wordsworth wrote: "The world is too much with us," and radio announcers play havoc with our thoughts.

We often hear someone say; Let's get away from it all, but they do not tell us where to go; possibly to some remote island in the Pacific, and even there we should probably discover communists shouting in the market places. We shall have peace of mind only when we are able to control our thoughts and at least mentally, live "Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife."

Our greatest sport in the old days was croquet, and I well recall the colored stakes and the balls with stripes around them in different colors; we often played at night, having lighted candles on the tops of the wickets. Now croquet is a game in which cheating is easy; I have even seen a deacon of the church, when he thought he was unobserved, edge his ball to a better position with his foot; we never played for money, for my grandfather, on whose lawn we played, did not approve of gambling and would not even have a pack of playing cards in his home.

In the winter we played battledore and shuttle cock, stretching a net in the living room. Then there were puzzles, a favorite being a board on which holes were bored in the form of a cross and wooden pegs or marbles jumped each other. The trick was to win by leaving a single peg or marble in the centre of the board.

Another sport was archery, when we tried to emulate Robin Hood, and imagined we were in the depths of Sherwood forest. There is, by the way, a very interesting account in Scott's IVANHOE of an archery tournament, in which Robin Hood,

masquerading under the name of 'Locksly' performed wonders with his bow.

Our reading matter was limited to the old Boston Journals, a staunch republican paper, Harper's Magazine and the Youth's Companion which came once a week: Every year the Companion issued an illustrated catalogue which showed the premiums one might win by obtaining one or more new subscribers; I recall I got a small printing press and a real steam-engine that burned alcohol; it had a safety valve and a whistle.

We had a library consisting of the classics and UNCLE TOM'S CABIN; I recall that the description of the death of little Eva made me cry.

Yes, the old days were good days, that live again in memory.

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